



General Assembly

February Session, 2012

Raised Bill No. 39

LCO No. 472

00472_____HED

Referred to Committee on Higher Education and Employment
Advancement

Introduced by:
(HED)

***AN ACT CONCERNING REQUIREMENTS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATORS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-16p of the 2012 supplement to the general
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
3 (*Effective July 1, 2012*):

4 (a) As used in sections 10-16o to 10-16s, inclusive, 10-16u, 17b-749a
5 and 17b-749c:

6 (1) "School readiness program" means a nonsectarian program that
7 (A) meets the standards set by the department pursuant to subsection
8 (b) of this section and the requirements of section 10-16q, and (B)
9 provides a developmentally appropriate learning experience of not less
10 than four hundred fifty hours and one hundred eighty days for eligible
11 children, except as provided in subsection (d) of section 10-16q;

12 (2) "Eligible children" means children three and four years of age
13 and children five years of age who are not eligible to enroll in school
14 pursuant to section 10-15c, or who are eligible to enroll in school and

15 will attend a school readiness program pursuant to section 10-16t;

16 (3) "Priority school" means a school in which forty per cent or more
17 of the lunches served are served to students who are eligible for free or
18 reduced price lunches pursuant to federal law and regulations,
19 excluding such a school located in a priority school district pursuant to
20 section 10-266p or in a former priority school district receiving a grant
21 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section and, on and after July 1, 2001,
22 excluding such a school in a transitional school district receiving a
23 grant pursuant to section 10-16u;

24 (4) "Severe need school" means a school in a priority school district
25 pursuant to section 10-266p or in a former priority school district in
26 which forty per cent or more of the lunches served are served to
27 students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches;

28 (5) "Accredited" means accredited by the National Association for
29 the Education of Young Children, a Head Start on-site program review
30 instrument or a successor instrument pursuant to federal regulations,
31 or otherwise meeting such criteria as may be established by the
32 commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social
33 Services, unless the context otherwise requires;

34 (6) "Year-round" means fifty weeks per year, except as provided in
35 subsection (d) of section 10-16q;

36 (7) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Education; and

37 (8) "Department" means the Department of Education.

38 (b) (1) The Department of Education shall be the lead agency for
39 school readiness. For purposes of this section and section 10-16u,
40 school readiness program providers eligible for funding from the
41 Department of Education shall include local and regional boards of
42 education, regional educational service centers, family resource centers
43 and providers of child day care centers, as defined in section 19a-77,
44 Head Start programs, preschool programs and other programs that

45 meet such standards established by the Commissioner of Education.
46 The department shall establish standards for school readiness
47 programs. The standards may include, but need not be limited to,
48 guidelines for staff-child interactions, curriculum content, including
49 preliteracy development, lesson plans, parent involvement, staff
50 qualifications and training, transition to school and administration.
51 The department shall develop age-appropriate developmental skills
52 and goals for children attending such programs. The commissioner, in
53 consultation with the president of the Board of Regents for Higher
54 Education, the Commissioner of Social Services and other appropriate
55 entities, shall develop a continuing education training program for the
56 staff of school readiness programs.

57 (2) For purposes of this section:

58 (A) Prior to July 1, 2015, "staff qualifications" means there is in each
59 classroom an individual who has at least the following: (i) A childhood
60 development associate credential or an equivalent credential issued by
61 an organization approved by the Commissioner of Education and
62 twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child
63 development, as determined by the president of the Board of Regents
64 for Higher Education, after consultation with the Commissioners of
65 Education and Social Services, from an institution of higher education
66 accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or State
67 Board of Education and regionally accredited; (ii) an associate's degree
68 with twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child
69 development, as determined by the president of the Board of Regents
70 for Higher Education, after consultation with the Commissioners of
71 Education and Social Services, from such an institution; (iii) a four-year
72 degree with twelve credits or more in early childhood education or
73 child development, as determined by the president of the Board of
74 Regents for Higher Education, after consultation with the
75 Commissioners of Education and Social Services, from such an
76 institution; or (iv) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an
77 endorsement in early childhood education or special education;

78 (B) From July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2020, "staff qualifications" for each
 79 early childhood education program serving infants, toddlers or
 80 preschool age children and accepting state funds for spaces associated
 81 with such program's child day care program or school readiness
 82 program means that [for each early childhood education program
 83 accepting state funds, including school readiness or childcare services
 84 funds and funds from the Department of Social Services,] (i) at least
 85 fifty per cent of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a
 86 classroom of infants, toddlers or preschool age children who are in an
 87 age group for which the early childhood education program accepts
 88 state funds hold (I) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an
 89 endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special
 90 education, or (II) a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early
 91 childhood education, including, but not limited to, a bachelor's degree
 92 in early childhood education, child study, child development or
 93 human growth and development, from an institution of higher
 94 education accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or
 95 State Board of Education and regionally accredited, provided such
 96 bachelor's degree program is approved by the Board of Regents for
 97 Higher Education and the Department of Education, and (ii) such
 98 remaining individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom
 99 of infants, toddlers or preschool age children who are in an age group
 100 for which the early childhood education program accepts state funds
 101 hold an associate degree with a concentration in early childhood
 102 education, including, but not limited to, an associate's degree in early
 103 childhood education, child study, child development or human
 104 growth and development, from an institution of higher education
 105 accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or State
 106 Board of Education and regionally accredited, provided such associate
 107 degree program is approved by the Board of Regents for Higher
 108 Education and the Department of Education; and

109 (C) On and after July 1, 2020, "staff qualifications" for each early
 110 childhood education program serving infants, toddlers or preschool
 111 age children and accepting state funds for spaces associated with such

112 program's child day care program or school readiness program means
 113 that [for each early childhood education program accepting state
 114 funds, including school readiness or childcare services funds and
 115 funds from the Department of Social Services,] one hundred per cent
 116 of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of
 117 infants, toddlers or preschool age children who are in an age group for
 118 which the early childhood education program accepts state funds hold
 119 (i) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in
 120 early childhood education or early childhood special education, or (ii)
 121 a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education,
 122 including, but not limited to, a bachelor's degree in early childhood
 123 education, child study, child development or human growth and
 124 development, from an institution of higher education accredited by the
 125 Board of Regents for Higher Education or State Board of Education
 126 and regionally accredited, provided such bachelor's degree program is
 127 approved by the Board of Regents for Higher Education and the
 128 Department of Education.

129 (3) Any individual with a bachelor's degree who, on or before June
 130 30, 2015, is employed as a teacher by an early childhood education
 131 program serving infants, toddlers or preschool age children that
 132 accepts state funds [, including school readiness or childcare services
 133 funds and funds from the Department of Social Services,] for spaces
 134 associated with such program's child day care program or school
 135 readiness program and meets the staff qualifications required under
 136 subparagraph (A) of subdivision (2) of this subsection shall be
 137 considered to meet the staff qualifications required under
 138 subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection. No
 139 such early childhood education program shall terminate any such
 140 individual from employment for purposes of meeting the staff
 141 qualification requirements set forth in subparagraph (B) or (C) of
 142 subdivision (2) of this subsection. Any such individual who terminates
 143 his or her employment with such early childhood education program
 144 and accepts a teacher position at another early childhood education
 145 program serving infants, toddlers or preschool age children and

146 accepting state funds for spaces associated with such program's child
147 day care program or school readiness program shall submit
148 documentation of such individual's progress toward meeting the staff
149 qualification requirements set forth in subparagraph (B) or (C) of
150 subdivision (2) of this subsection in a manner determined by the
151 Department of Education.

152 (4) Any individual with a bachelor's degree other than those
153 bachelor's degrees specified in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of
154 subdivision (2) of this subsection may submit documentation
155 concerning such degree for review and assessment by the Department
156 of Education as to whether such degree has a sufficient concentration
157 in early childhood education so as to satisfy the requirements set forth
158 in said subparagraphs (A) and (B).

159 (c) The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the
160 Commissioner of Social Services, shall establish a grant program to
161 provide spaces in accredited school readiness programs for eligible
162 children who reside in priority school districts pursuant to section 10-
163 266p or in former priority school districts as provided in this
164 subsection. Under the program, the grant shall be provided, in
165 accordance with this section, to the town in which such priority school
166 district or former priority school district is located. Eligibility shall be
167 determined for a five-year period based on an applicant's designation
168 as a priority school district for the initial year of application, except
169 that if a school district that receives a grant pursuant to this subsection
170 is no longer designated as a priority school district at the end of such
171 five-year period, such former priority school district shall continue to
172 be eligible to receive a grant pursuant to this subsection. Grant awards
173 shall be made annually contingent upon available funding and a
174 satisfactory annual evaluation. The chief elected official of such town
175 and the superintendent of schools for such priority school district or
176 former priority school district shall submit a plan for the expenditure
177 of grant funds and responses to the local request for proposal process
178 to the Departments of Education and Social Services. The departments

179 shall jointly review such plans and shall each approve the portion of
180 such plan within its jurisdiction for funding. The plan shall: (1) Be
181 developed in consultation with the local or regional school readiness
182 council established pursuant to section 10-16r; (2) be based on a needs
183 and resource assessment; (3) provide for the issuance of requests for
184 proposals for providers of accredited school readiness programs,
185 provided, after the initial requests for proposals, facilities that have
186 been approved to operate a child care program financed through the
187 Connecticut Health and Education Facilities Authority and have
188 received a commitment for debt service from the Department of Social
189 Services pursuant to section 17b-749i, are exempt from the requirement
190 for issuance of annual requests for proposals; and (4) identify the need
191 for funding pursuant to section 17b-749a in order to extend the hours
192 and days of operation of school readiness programs in order to
193 provide child day care services for children attending such programs.

194 (d) (1) The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the
195 Commissioner of Social Services, shall establish a competitive grant
196 program to provide spaces in accredited school readiness programs for
197 eligible children who reside (A) in an area served by a priority school
198 or a former priority school as provided for in subdivision (2) of this
199 subsection, (B) in a town ranked one to fifty when all towns are ranked
200 in ascending order according to town wealth, as defined in subdivision
201 (26) of section 10-262f, whose school district is not a priority school
202 district pursuant to section 10-266p, or (C) in a town formerly a town
203 described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, as provided for in
204 subdivision (2) of this subsection. A town in which a priority school is
205 located, a regional school readiness council, pursuant to subsection (c)
206 of section 10-16r, for a region in which such a school is located or a
207 town described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision may apply for
208 such a grant in an amount not to exceed one hundred seven thousand
209 dollars per priority school or town. Eligibility shall be determined for a
210 five-year period based on an applicant's designation as having a
211 priority school or being a town described in subparagraph (B) of this
212 subdivision for the initial year of application. Grant awards shall be

213 made annually contingent upon available funding and a satisfactory
214 annual evaluation. The chief elected official of such town and the
215 superintendent of schools of the school district or the regional school
216 readiness council shall submit a plan, as described in subsection (c) of
217 this section, for the expenditure of such grant funds to the Department
218 of Education. In awarding grants pursuant to this subsection, the
219 commissioner shall give preference to applications submitted by
220 regional school readiness councils and may, within available
221 appropriations, provide a grant in excess of one hundred seven
222 thousand dollars to towns with two or more priority schools in such
223 district. A town or regional school readiness council awarded a grant
224 pursuant to this subsection shall use the funds to purchase spaces for
225 such children from providers of accredited school readiness programs.

226 (2) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (C) of this subdivision,
227 commencing with the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, if a town
228 received a grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection and is
229 no longer eligible to receive such a grant, the town may receive a
230 phase-out grant for each of the three fiscal years following the fiscal
231 year such town received its final grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of
232 this subsection.

233 (B) The amount of such phase-out grants shall be determined as
234 follows: (i) For the first fiscal year following the fiscal year such town
235 received its final grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in
236 an amount that does not exceed seventy-five per cent of the grant
237 amount such town received for the town or school's final year of
238 eligibility pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection; (ii) for the
239 second fiscal year following the fiscal year such town received its final
240 grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in an amount that
241 does not exceed fifty per cent of the grant amount such town received
242 for the town's or school's final year of eligibility pursuant to
243 subdivision (1) of this subsection; and (iii) for the third fiscal year
244 following the fiscal year such town received its final grant pursuant to
245 subdivision (1) of this subsection, in an amount that does not exceed

246 twenty-five per cent of the grant amount such town received for the
247 town's or school's final year of eligibility pursuant to subdivision (1) of
248 this subsection.

249 (C) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011, and each fiscal year
250 thereafter, any town that received a grant pursuant to subparagraph
251 (B) of subdivision (1) of this subsection for the fiscal year ending June
252 30, 2010, shall continue to receive a grant under this subsection even if
253 the town no longer meets the criteria for such grant pursuant to
254 subparagraph (B) of subdivision (1) of this subsection.

255 (e) (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, and each fiscal year
256 thereafter, priority school districts and former priority school districts
257 shall receive grants based on the sum of the products obtained by (A)
258 multiplying the district's number of contracted slots on March thirtieth
259 of the fiscal year prior to the fiscal year in which the grant is to be paid,
260 by the per child cost pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of
261 section 10-16q, except that such per child cost shall be reduced for slots
262 that are less than year-round, and (B) multiplying the number of
263 additional or decreased slots the districts have requested for the fiscal
264 year in which the grant is to be paid by the per child cost pursuant to
265 subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of section 10-16q, except such per
266 child cost shall be reduced for slots that are less than year-round. If
267 said sum exceeds the available appropriation, such number of
268 requested additional slots shall be reduced, as determined by the
269 Commissioner of Education, to stay within the available appropriation.

270 (2) (A) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of
271 this section are not expended, the Commissioner of Education may
272 deposit such unexpended funds in the account established under
273 section 10-16aa and use such unexpended funds in accordance with
274 the provisions of section 10-16aa.

275 (B) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012, and each fiscal year
276 thereafter, if funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of
277 this section are not expended, an amount up to five hundred thousand

278 dollars of such unexpended funds may be available for use in
 279 accordance with the provisions of this subparagraph for the
 280 subsequent fiscal year. The Commissioner of Education may use such
 281 unexpended funds on and after July 1, 2012, in consultation with the
 282 president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, to support
 283 early childhood education programs accepting state funds in satisfying
 284 the staff qualifications requirements of subparagraphs (B) and (C) of
 285 subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section. The [local school
 286 readiness programs] Department of Education shall use any such
 287 funds to provide assistance to individual staff members, giving
 288 priority to those staff members attending an institution of higher
 289 education accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or
 290 State Board of Education and regionally accredited, at a maximum of
 291 five thousand dollars per staff member per year for the cost of higher
 292 education courses leading to a bachelor's degree or, not later than
 293 December 31, 2013, an associate's degree, as such degrees are described
 294 in said subparagraphs (B) and (C) at an in-state public institution of
 295 higher education or a Connecticut-based for-profit or nonprofit
 296 institution of higher education, provided such staff members have
 297 applied for all available federal and state scholarships and grants, and
 298 such assistance does not exceed such staff members' financial need.
 299 [Local school readiness programs] Individual staff members shall
 300 apply for such unexpended funds in [such program's application for a
 301 school readiness grant pursuant to this section] a manner determined
 302 by the Department of Education. The Commissioner of Education shall
 303 determine, in consultation with the president of the Board of Regents
 304 for Higher Education, how such unexpended funds shall be
 305 distributed.

306 (C) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of this
 307 section are not expended pursuant to subsection (c) of this section,
 308 deposited pursuant to subparagraph (A) of this subdivision, or used
 309 pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, the Commissioner of
 310 Education may use such unexpended funds to support local school
 311 readiness programs. The commissioner may use such funds for

312 purposes including, but not limited to, (i) assisting local school
313 readiness programs in meeting and maintaining accreditation
314 requirements, (ii) providing training in implementing the preschool
315 assessment and curriculum frameworks, including training to enhance
316 literacy teaching skills, (iii) developing a state-wide preschool
317 curriculum, (iv) developing student assessments for students in grades
318 kindergarten to two, inclusive, (v) developing and implementing best
319 practices for parents in supporting preschool and kindergarten student
320 learning, (vi) developing and implementing strategies for children to
321 transition from preschool to kindergarten, (vii) providing for
322 professional development, including assisting in career ladder
323 advancement, for school readiness staff, and (viii) providing
324 supplemental grants to other towns that are eligible for grants
325 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

326 (3) Notwithstanding subdivision (2) of this subsection, for the fiscal
327 years ending June 30, 2008, to June 30, 2013, inclusive, the Department
328 of Education may retain up to one hundred ninety-eight thousand two
329 hundred dollars of the amount appropriated for purposes of this
330 section for coordination, program evaluation and administration.

331 (f) Any school readiness program that receives funds pursuant to
332 this section or section 10-16u shall not discriminate on the basis of race,
333 color, national origin, gender, religion or disability. For purposes of
334 this section, a nonsectarian program means any public or private
335 school readiness program that is not violative of the Establishment
336 Clause of the Constitution of the State of Connecticut or the
337 Establishment Clause of the Constitution of the United States of
338 America.

339 (g) Subject to the provisions of this subsection, no funds received by
340 a town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-
341 16u shall be used to supplant federal, state or local funding received by
342 such town for early childhood education, provided a town may use an
343 amount determined in accordance with this subsection for

344 coordination, program evaluation and administration. Such amount
345 shall be at least twenty-five thousand dollars but not more than
346 seventy-five thousand dollars and shall be determined by the
347 Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of
348 Social Services, based on the school readiness grant award allocated to
349 the town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-
350 16u and the number of operating sites for coordination, program
351 evaluation and administration. Such amount shall be increased by an
352 amount equal to local funding provided for early childhood education
353 coordination, program evaluation and administration, not to exceed
354 twenty-five thousand dollars. Each town that receives a grant pursuant
355 to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-16u shall designate
356 a person to be responsible for such coordination, program evaluation
357 and administration and to act as a liaison between the town and the
358 Departments of Education and Social Services. Each school readiness
359 program that receives funds pursuant to this section or section 10-16u
360 shall provide information to the department or the school readiness
361 council, as requested, that is necessary for purposes of any school
362 readiness program evaluation.

363 (h) For the first three years a town receives grants pursuant to this
364 section, such grants may be used, with the approval of the
365 commissioner, to prepare a facility or staff for operating a school
366 readiness program and shall be adjusted based on the number of days
367 of operation of a school readiness program if a shorter term of
368 operation is approved by the commissioner.

369 (i) A town may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible
370 children who reside in such town at an accredited school readiness
371 program located in another town. A regional school readiness council
372 may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible children who
373 reside in the region covered by the council at an accredited school
374 readiness program located outside such region.

375 (j) Children enrolled in school readiness programs funded pursuant

376 to this section shall not be counted (1) as resident students for
377 purposes of subdivision (22) of section 10-262f, or (2) in the
378 determination of average daily membership pursuant to subdivision
379 (2) of subsection (a) of section 10-261.

380 (k) Up to two per cent of the amount of the appropriation for this
381 section may be allocated to the competitive grant program pursuant to
382 subsection (d) of this section. The determination of the amount of such
383 allocation shall be made on or before August first.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2012	10-16p

Statement of Purpose:

To clarify the staff qualification requirements for early childhood education programs serving infants, toddlers or preschool age children and accepting state funds for such programs' child day care or school readiness programs.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]